Prologue

"My crown! She has my crown!"

Those words alone had been enough to trigger the greatest fury in my heart; this rage burned even brighter when I spotted the cloaked mortal trying to slip away from the room, my companion's crown and element tucked away in her bag.

Thief!

With a furious roar, I pounced from the shadows and charged upon the little mammal, intent on crushing her like the vermin she has; even under the hood, one could see the almost comical alarm and terror in her eyes. Clearly she had not been expecting my presence of all things in this peaceful land. It was a reaction I had received from many of the foes I had faced and crushed in this land since arriving here almost two years ago. The self-proclaimed 'Goddesses' of Night and Day, the hybrid reality bender, the shape-shifting parasite, and even the previous Dovahkiin ruler of this empire of ice and crystal. All erupting with unexpected fear as I brought forth my fiery vengeance upon them.

This little thief *was no different.*

The palace of crystal shook violently as I pursued the wretch, destroying all in my path; my mighty form tore through the walls and hallways, causing a lot of damage. I didn't care, though. A thief had slipped into *my domain and made off with my treasure!*

She will *BURN!*

The destruction and noise caused by it awoke many, if not all, of my other companions, both of this world and the old, and once they realized what was going on, they joined my side in pursuing the thief. Either making a grab or firing their weapons at her as she passed, or chasing her along the other halls; by the time she had reached the room where the artifacts where stored, she had an entire army on her tail, I in front.

And yet, for each time we moved to stop her, she avoided even the swiftest and truest of aims and attacks; she blinked in and out of existence, dodging each lash and arrow, or even catching the attacks in her magic and sending them back to those who cast them. I was confused by this; these spells...they were ones that most mortals of this world could not even wield, let alone with such skill, not even the so-called goddesses of this land; my companion, a recently-transformed alicorn by the name of Twilight Sparkle, and the owner of the crown, could wield such an ability, but only because she was the wielder of the very element the thief was making off with.

Speaking of whom, she had teleported herself ahead, ordering the thief to stop. The thief ignored her, teleporting past her...but this time, in a way that left her cloak behind. When she

reappeared behind, her true face and form was revealed. A unicorn, bearing the colors of the sun and a mane like fire, the mark of a crimson star upon her flank.

I recognized this unicorn. The ruling alicorn, Celestia, had spoken of her before: the lost student, before Twilight. The one that was to be the wearer of the very crown she was trying to steal, but had been deemed unworthy.

Sunset Shimmer.

So...Thief...back to 'claim what should've been yours', are you?

Not on your life.

As I said before, our chase led us to the 'Artifact Room', where the ruling powers of this kingdom stored all the ancient and magical items that had been discovered. Recently, after the 'Invasion of the Changelings' in the capital city, it was decided to move all these said artifacts that the nation had collected and stored them all here, high in the frozen north where their enemies wouldn't even think to look, let alone be able to reach without a means of incredibly high-endurance transportation. And one of these items was the tall mirror standing against the far wall of the room.

This mirror...*puzzled me. I had seen it in Celestia's throne room many times before, and something about it just made me confused. The sheer size of it, let alone how it was built, with a stair-like base and gate-like arch...it looked as if it was suppose to be a door, one that a mortal would walk up and through...but why? It was a mirror. How could one walk through it? That, and I could sense it...the magic...a very powerful magic, coming from it. Of a kind that felt familiar, but at the same time was a type that I hadn't felt before.*

I would, however, find out soon enough, for the thief was racing straight for it, as if her life depended on reaching it. My instinct, forged over many adventures with strange and fantastical events and things, took over when I saw this: she wanted the mirror, as if knowing it would save her, and I wasn't going to allow her to be 'saved'.

So I leaped forward, lashed my long tail forward like a giant mace, and smashed the mirror with my tail-blade, crushing the arch and shattering the glass into a million pieces.

That soon proved to be a mistake.

The very world shook from an eruption of magical break, which knocked all of my companions back out into the hall and slammed the doors shut, leaving me alone in the room with the thief and the crown. The shards and pieces of the mirror vibrated with multicolored energy, before merging in the air and exploding forth in the form of what appeared to be a rip in the very air before us. It was a tear in the very fabric of existence, which I now know I created by destroying the mirror, which was in fact a portal to an alternate reality.

And I had just destroyed what kept it closed.

Like a mighty black hole, the tear began to draw everything around it into itself, like the current of a whirlpool pulling ships into its core; as items, artifacts, furniture, and even chunks of the very walls were sucked into the roaring abyss to Oblivion, I soon realized that even my own strength wouldn't last against it should it grow any stronger.

Then I saw the crown, which had been wrenched from the thief's saddle-bag, flying toward the gap.

Time seemed to slow at that moment, as I watched in anger and alarm as the Element of Magic was sucked into the tunnel-like hole. That item was not only one of the powerful relics of this world, but Equestria's greatest source of power and protection! It if was lost, the tree and the other elements would be incomplete and the kingdom would lose one of its powerful means of defense against opposing forces. Normally, I wouldn't care; even before I was bestowed with the elements, I was more than powerful enough to face any threat that I haven't already crushed, while the Elements and their bearers were now simply a shield to make sure the innocent weren't harm during my rampages...but that crown...it meant more to me than a simple piece of a hoard.

It represented and forged the bond I had with young Twilight Sparkle...my friend. If I lost it, then the bond I shared with her would follow soon after!

I had to get it back!

The thief was thinking along the same lines of 'losing what she wanted', for when she spotted it flying from her bag, she let go of the pillar of crystal she was clinging to and jumped for it...but she missed it, it flying just short of her hooves, and she herself was pulled into the portal, along with the crown...and the portal began to close...

It was now or never. The portal would likely not open again without the mirror, and as far as I knew, it was the only means to getting into the world that the crown, and the thief, were now in.

I would not lose the anchor to a bond that I had come to treasure as much as gold.

So I leaped forward, ignoring the cries from my allies on the other side of the door, and dove head first into the portal. I could feel the magical fluxing around me, slowly losing the ability to keep the portal...the doorway back to my home-worlds...and my friends...open any longer; I barely pulled the last of my tail through before it closed behind me.

Maybe even for *good.*

I still question the rationality of my decision at that moment.

What happened next was unlike anything I felt before, even with normal portals. I felt as if I was being pulled along a mighty current of immeasurable speeds; speeds that pulled me through entire realms, sending me tumbling about the tunnel of colors and light. I could feel powerful magic at work around me; magic that defied the laws of the universe, allowing those who used them to breach through the boundaries of time and space, passing from one realm to another.

Not even the MiiraadziemSovaarre operated on this level of power, and that in itself is impressive.

Then another magic came into play, one that I was not pleased to feel. As I passed through the great boundary that the portal was created to breach, I began to feel Transformation Magic; the kind of magic beings used to turn themselves or another from one form to another. I could feel it pushing against my own power, trying to worm its filthy way into my body, and change it into what preference it had for its world...something lesser than what I am.

I growled in defiance and fought back with my own magic, forcing it away and tearing it asunder. I will not *bow to its desires and become anything less than the god that I am! I am Jendovahzoor! Heir of Alduin and Malefor! Titan of the Skies! Harbinger of Fire and Death! And Chosen Avatar of the Tree of Harmony! I will not change to please whatever petty gods or worthless magic ruled this new world!*

They will change to please me!

I seized the sources of the magic within the portal and, with a mighty roar, blasted them into oblivion with my own. The tunnel around me shook and rumbled with thunder, its inner workings forever torn apart. I did not care, though.

I bow to *no one.*

The portal continued to shake from the disruption, and for a moment I believed it was going to collapse with me in it, but at that last moment a bright light like a thousand suns exploded forth, consuming me and all of reality in white.

Then it flashed out of existence. I was suddenly caught in gravity's grip once more, and I crashed, rather unceremoniously, into the earth of a new world. At least the dirt tasted the same.

Groaning softly, more out of frustration than pain, I pushed myself up into at sitting position and surveyed my surroundings. I had entered this world in the middle of a large forest. The trees, which by scent I recognized as the same as Equestrian's woodland trees, were larger than their normal counterparts, as if to match up to something larger than ponies. A small creek ran through the woods before me, creating the pleasant sounds of a trickling stream. The moon was high in the starry night sky, and the woods probably would've been filled with the nighty ambiance of this world's nightlife, had my entrance and presence not silenced them in terror.

And the crown and thief were nowhere in sight.

Looks like my interference with the portal's magic had consequences after all. I could sense the Element of Magic nearby, thanks to my connection with it; I could feel it in the distance, it's magic calling to me, like a tiny speck of light in the vast darkness. So I was in the right world, and close by, but not where I was supposed to have come out.

Oh, well. I'll simply follow the element's light and tear it from the thief's corpse...though I might spare the thief, if she can show me the way she used to get to Equestria.

Strangely, though...this world felt very similar to Equestria: the physical appearance and 'feel' of the realm, along with the kind of magic that flowed in it's workings. The magic itself was very, very low, almost to the point of non-existence: just enough to keep this world's workings flowing and capable of supporting life, but it was Equestrian all the same. Must be how they're connected.

It felt very odd, almost wrong. I have lived my entire life in worlds overflowing with magic, some to the point where the realm's very existence was supernatural...so now, to be thrown into this 'dry' world...It was like living your entire life in the wettest, most life-filled tropical forest in the world, and then suddenly being dropped off in a split second to the driest, most barren desert.

It felt so...*empty.*

Also, it didn't smell the same either. The air may have appeared clean and clear, but it smelled 'dirty', like it had traces of smoke and fire...and not of the good kind. I recognized it as a kind of smog, like that produced by trolls and their machines. The beings of this world must've been farther along in technology than mine.

Then I heard ambiance in the distance. Strange, unnatural sounds...'honks', 'beeps', 'screeches', and other such blaring or drumming noises. They were coming from over the distant top of the hill I was resting against, and looking up that hill I saw what I first thought to be the light of the sun leaking over the top.

Something didn't feel right...

I shakily stood up, growling a bit in pain as I shifted my weight off my right shoulder; that was going to hurt in the morning...but I shrugged it off and ascended the mountain. The nightly ambiance near the top quickly fell silence as I approached, the ground shaking beneath my footfalls, the trees groaning and cracking as I pushed my way through until I reached the top, entering a clearing of unnatural origin: the area had been cleared to make a place where mortals came to admire the view from behind the safety of those small, wooden rails made of logs.

And what a view it was.

Laying before me, spreading over much of the expanded land, was a massive, bright, and loud kingdom of the likes I had never seen before. Great towers of glass and metal dominated most of the area, stretching as tall as small mountains, and dozens, if not hundreds, of huts the size of small castles and of all sorts of different shapes and sizes spread across the outer lands like a giant patchwork quilt. Covering the earth and weaving amongst the buildings like the webs of a spider's cave were large, grey roads that seemed to go just about everywhere, even rising up off the ground and circling around the towers and huts, or disappearing over the horizon in great, long strips. Further inland, large expanses of farmland covered the plains, along with huge areas of hundreds and hundreds of smaller (but still impressively large) huts lined up in perfect formation. On the other side, branching across the bay leading out to sea, was a massive dock area, where metal ships larger than Sky Whales found rest after their long journeys at sea, carrying loads of metal, multicolored rectangles. And everything (minus the farm) seemed to blaze with bright, unnatural light; they were mostly yellow or white, but there were also instances of blue, red, purple, green, just every color known, covering the towers, castles, and huts, as well as moving at great speeds across the gray roads.

What kind of kingdom was this?

In all of my centuries, I have never seen a city of this size and might. Everything was so bright...so loud...and everything was moving so fast and going everywhere all at once. It was most likely a singular city, but its population was probably larger than an entire small-sized empire!

Tough the question still remained:

What was the population of?

The flickering of unnatural lights drew my gaze away from the sight of the city; farther off to the side of the clearing, near the beginning of what must've been a walking trail through the forest, was a small (by my standards, at least) flat board of wood mounted on two thin legs, with a roof overhanging the front. Under this roof were two glass orbs that glowed with this bright light, a strange high-pitching humming like electricity coming from them, their light illuminating the front of the board and drawing in a number of moths and other nocturnal insect life to its glow. This same light made me wince as I approached, burning in my adjusting eyes; it was unnatural...not like the flowing glow of the sun, but more of a searing glare of technology. I didn't like it. Thankfully a small burst of my power was all it took to make them blink out with a static-like crack, plunging the area into darkness and frying most of the insect flitting about it.

It didn't bother me. I can see in the dark.

And in this comfortable dark I could easily see what this board had pinned to it. Numerous parchments pinned against the...wood? Pinned against it by tiny flat circles that I guessed were

a kind of nail; the parchments, while worn a bit by time, were of incredible quality and condition: pure white, flat, and unworn. The art of the images were very clear and realistic, as if someone had taken the very sight of the view or event and put it into a 'picture' of sorts. Large bold letters made in a strange, eye-catching style read in normal Equestrian: 'Everfree Forest National Park'

...Everfree? But...this wasn't the Everfree. I would know: I ruled the Everfree back home, and this was not the one I knew of...maybe...it was another Everfree?

I was confused...

...then...I saw it; an image on the billboard, and in that one split-second my confusion vanished, and my vision went **RED.**

Standing upright on two legs...

THIEVES!

Hairless and armor-less bodies, minus the top and sides of their heads, covered in tunics and clothing...

FIRE!

Their wrinkled, wretched faces twisted into mocking smiles, their cheerful, mocking eyes filling me with a rage of the likes I have never felt before...

MURRDERRRRR!

A race long thought by the Dov to have vanished eons ago...*a filth I hoped never to meet, for my fury would blaze with a ferocity that would endanger all...and when I saw them in that image, I roared with emotion. Here they were, hiding away behind a mirror in a distant pocket of existence, far from even the eyes of those who had burned their entire worthless world long ago.*

Man.

Rage. Hate. Fury. Fire. Death. All these and more burned within my chest with such strength that my fire burned on its own will; the dark clearing was soon engulfed in the glow of a great fire. And *I was that fire. These...animals. These...filth-pleasuring whores! How dare they even believe that they had so much as a right to live, let alone in MY presence! Just like the insects they were, surviving and multiplying even further to enrage us even further, like cockroaches wriggling through sewage! AFTER ALL THESE CENTURIES, WAS THEIR DISGRACEFUL EXISTENCE JUST GOING TO BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN?!*

With a roar that made the very air shake in fear of my rage, I raised back on my hind legs and slammed my forepaws down upon the board before me; it splintered into a thousand shards as it was struck from above by the force of an asteroid impact, scattering the wood through the air with an ear-pounding explosion that rumbled for miles; birds scattered to the sky in the hundreds as the earth shook throughout the land, and the echoes continued to thunder on, long after the dust settled, revealing the flattened pile of splinters under my claw. But it did little to soothe the fire raging inside; as long as those worms wriggled about any world, I would never find peace of mind...

...well...they're going to wish they had stayed dead...

For *I had found them.*

And I will make them *pay.*

The fire in my eyes licked all the way up to the base of my horns as I turned my gaze to the sight of the giant glowing city: a once impressive sight now drenched in the disgrace of truth. So widespread...so ugly...so *lifeless...it could use a touch of beauty to it...*

...and nothing was more beautiful than the orange glow of fire.

A dark thirst for blood filled my mouth and throat as I spread my wings and took to the skies, the glow of my fire making me a comet blazing across the sky as I soared toward my first target. Forget the Element. Forget the Thief. And forget Equestria; they will have to wait. I have a new, more personal goal now: I will destroy this world; I will cleanse it afresh in a storm of fire and revenge, along with every last scrap of mankind's existence...enjoy your last breaths while you can, you worthless sacks of meat. You will not escape the fire *this time...*

You. Will. ***BURN*****.**